### ODHH Legislative Day

On February 15, 2010, the Governor’s Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing hosted its first Deaf and Hard of Hearing Legislative Awareness Day. Despite the snow on the ground and the threat of snow coming that afternoon more than 40 people came to experience the day. Since schools were closed this day I felt this would be a nice opportunity for my children to experience how the Legislative process in Maryland really works.

The day began at 3:00 with a presentation by Lisa Kornberg. Lisa discussed how the Legislative process in Maryland works, and gave tips for effective advocacy in Annapolis. At 4:00 we all went to the State House for a tour. I would recommend anyone visiting Annapolis to do this free tour. Information was shared about the State House, George Washington, and we learned many small facts that were very interesting.

We returned to the House Office Building for an awards presentation. Lt. Governor, Anthony Brown opened the ceremony with a few comments. Lt. Brown spoke about his recent visit to the Maryland School for the Deaf and how the experience meeting the students at the school, he spoke about the importance of the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf-Blind communities in Maryland. ODHH presented awards to Sherry Little from the Department of Legislative Services, Senator Mooney and Senator Stone, all for their outstanding commitment to ensuring communication access for Marylanders with hearing loss.

After the Awards Presentation, we were able to meet with our legislators. We met with Senator Alan Kittleman and Representative Susan Krebbs. What a nice experience. We enjoyed meeting them and realized they were truly interested in what issues are important to us and why. The night ended with a viewing of the general session in the House. This special House Session honored President Lincoln.

It was very nice to be able to share this educational and important experience with my children.

We are looking forward to next year’s ODHH Legislative Day and as a parent, I would encourage families to attend and experience this day with their children.

### Summer Career Exploration Program

The Explore Your Future (EYF) program at Rochester Institute of Technology offers college-bound high school sophomores and juniors with hearing loss a unique opportunity to experience life on a college campus, explore their interests and sample various careers.

Hundreds of students from across the country participate in this six-day, summer career exploration program that provides them with hands-on activities related to careers in engineering, art, business, computers, science and more.

EYF sessions for summer 2010 are July 17 - 22 and July 24 - 29, 2010. On the final day of each session parents attend a workshop that helps them prepare their student for life after high school.

Students may apply online at www.rit.edu/NTID/EYFNCR. For more information call 9585) 475-6700 (v/tty) or email EYFinfo@rit.edu. The application deadline is April 30, 2010.

### Leap To A ...Star

Innovative Summer Preschool Program that blends award-winning Language Learning Early Advantage Program (LEAP) Preschool and Speech Therapy and Aural Rehabilitation (STAR) Programs for children 3 - 5 years old with Cochlear Implants and/or Hearing Aids

University of Maryland – Dept. of Hearing & Speech Sciences

June 2 – July 9, 2010

For more information contact Paula Schauer or Dianne Handy (310) 405-4218

Applications are available online at www.bsos.umd.edu/hesp/clinicservices/STAR.htm
### Camp SHARP 2010

**June 21 – July 30, 2010**

The Gallaudet University Hearing & Speech Center is hosting Camp SHARP. The program provides an intensive, language-rich, communication-accessible, and enjoyable environment for deaf and hard of hearing children to improve their spoken language skills. The children will have opportunities to develop and enhance their spoken English skills and have their sign language skills reinforced through child-centered, play-based activities.

**Camp Features:**
- Serves children age 2 years to rising kindergartners
- Theme-based, developmentally appropriate activities
- Morning sessions with an option for afternoon childcare
- Low child to clinician ratio
- Focus on speech, spoken language, and listening skills within a literacy-rich environment

For more information contact Andrea Handscomb at 202-448-6967 or andrea.handscomb@gallaudet.edu

### Participants Needed!

**Hearing Parents of Children Identified With Hearing Loss**

- You must be a hearing parent of a child that has been diagnosed with hearing loss.
- Your child must be between the ages of 1.5 and 5 years old.
- Your child must not have any additional medical disabilities.
- Due to the limitations of the researcher, all participants must be English speaking.

You will be asked to fill out some questionnaires and complete a videotaped interview. The study takes 60-90 minutes. You will be compensated $30.00.

For more information contact Elizabeth Adams at Elizabeth.adams@gallaudet.edu

This study is approved by the Gallaudet University IRB

### Port Discovery Children’s Museum

Port Discovery Children’s Museum in partnership with the Maryland State Department of Education Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services is providing free Family Access Passes for you to use.

If you would like to visit Port Discovery free of charge contact Cheri Dowling at the Family Support and Resource Center. The Center has 2 passes available for families to borrow, each pass admits up to 3 children or adults to the Museum free of charge.

For more information contact Cheri Dowling at 443-277-8899 or partners@msd.edu

### Camp Adventure

**August 19 - 22, 2010**

Deaf Independent Living Association (DILA) is hosting it’s third overnight camping season. This year will be an exciting four day, three night weekend to share experiences, make new friends and reunite with some old ones.

The camp will be held at Camp Pecometh in Centreville, MD.

Registration is open for children who are deaf, hard of hearing, siblings or children with deaf or hard of hearing family members. The campers will be divided into two age groups, 5—12 and 13—17. Each group will have age appropriate individual group activities as well as combined group activities.

The cost is $155 per campers ages 5—12 and $165 per camper ages 13—17.

Space is limited

For more information contact DILA at 410-742-5052 v/tty or 443-365-2647 vp or visit www.dila.org

### Did You Know

At least 75% of the media used in classrooms is not accessible to kids with vision or hearing loss.

Learn how to make a difference

Visit: www.dcmp.org/equalaccess
Creating and Using Experience Books

The benefits of reading to children has been well documented over the years. When choosing books for your child, don’t overlook what may be the very best book of all - an experience book about your child. Experience books are homemade books that record the memories and happenings of day-to-day life in your family. These books can take many different forms and be

Making an Experience Book

Before gathering your supplies, consider the age of your child and his or her developmental stage. For babies and very young children, picture albums with plastic photo sleeves will be sufficient, while for older children, a binder or bound notebook will be more appropriate. For younger children, color photos or magazine pictures of objects provide vocabulary stimulation. For older children, however more elaborate pages can be designed that include multiple photos, glued in souvenir items or hand drawn scenes that will stimulate discussion with more complex language. When choosing what to include in your book, keep in mind that your goal is to create a book that interests your child while providing plentiful opportunities to talk about and expand on things that are familiar to him or her.

Some photo book ideas for children 2 and under

- “Familiar Faces” with pictures of family members, baby-sitters and pets.
- “Baby at Play” with pictures of your child in different locations like in the tub, in the highchair or riding in the car.
- “A Phone Book” with pictures of relatives that your baby might visit infrequently.
- “Things Around the House” with pictures of favorite objects like a sippy cup, a bathtub duck, a blanket or a coat.
- “Places We Go” with pictures of familiar destinations like preschool, and the grocery store among others.

For an older child, you might choose to make a journal-style book that records activities from each day. Included in such a book could be entries for vacations and fieldtrips, visits from family members, birthday parties or other special events. Of course, don’t forget to include things that may be ordinary but still language rich. For example, an entry about dinner could emphasize the concepts of cold and hot, while an entry about brushing teeth could show a record finding a nest or paste a gum wrapper to commemorate blowing a bubble for the first time.

Choosing an object that has meaning for your child, though it might seem unimportant to you, may be just the thing to grab your child’s attention. For example include an old bird feather to record finding a nest or paste a gum wrapper to commemorate blowing a bubble for the first time.

Capitalize on language targets with interactive pages will add to the fun of your child’s book. For example, add envelopes on the page showing your child’s trip to the zoo. All your child to organize pictures of animals that do live in the zoo or do NOT live in the zoo.

Ideas for other types of Experience Books

- Sequence books or “how to” books like one for making pizza or packing the car.
- Behavior books to reinforce limit setting and appropriate behaviors.
- Photo albums and other media created from web-based photo-sharing sites.
- Child-made books with drawings and artwork.

Using an Experience Book

Once you’ve started making your book, it’s time to enjoy it with your child. Just as with any storybook, there are many “right” ways to do that. Strategies to try include:

- Capitalizing on your child’s interest in particular pictures or pages by staying there as long as is desired. Describe the picture, find other pictures of the same thing on different pages, sing a song that is related … the possibilities are endless.
- Sharing the book casually, commenting on pictures and objects.
- Reading the pages just like any storybook, creating a beginning, middle and end of the story.
- Using the pages for language practice by describing a picture and then asking your child to find in in the book or by naming people and then having your child find them in different pictures.
- Using the pages for story-telling practice by having your child do the reading at bedtime or in a waiting room.

Experience books of all varieties can be invaluable tools for language and speech development for the child. Enjoy making yours.

Reprinted from HOPE TIPS, Learning with Literacy

More HOPE Resources can be found at www.cochlear.com/HOPE
Teach Your Child to Blow Their Nose

Make a game out of it.

Start by having your child blow air out of their mouth, and then have them close their mouth and blow air out of their nose. Then hold a tissue in front of their nose, and see if they can make the tissue blow in the wind.

Another game kids love is blowing cereal across the table using their noses.

The best time for a child to learn is when their nose isn’t stuffy, because at first, many kids are scared of the mucus coming out.

Reprinted from Woman’s Day, March 2010, womansday.com

Mark Your Calendar Today for These Upcoming Events

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>April 10, 2010</th>
<th>April 28, 2010</th>
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<tr>
<td>Strategies for Changing Behavior in Children</td>
<td>Cochlear Implant Family Support Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>A Conference for Parents, Family Members, Caregivers and Professionals Interested in Helping a Child with Challenging Behaviors</td>
<td>Understanding the IEP and Accommodations for Children with Cochlear Implants</td>
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<td>Hagerstown, MD</td>
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<td>Adventures in ASL! The Sequel</td>
<td>Early Literacy Conference</td>
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<td>Ellicott City &amp; Frederick, MD</td>
<td>Evidenced Based Best Practices for Young Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children in Natural Environments</td>
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<th>May 11, 2010</th>
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<tr>
<td>Building a Community of Friends</td>
<td>Cochlear Implant Family Support Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presented by Gina Oliva, Ph.D.</td>
<td>Student &amp; Parent Social</td>
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For information on any of the above events, please contact Cheri Dowling at 443-277-8899 (Voice/text) or partners@msd.edu